

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 HA-05 L-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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P 052200Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2608
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 12707

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINT, CSCE, SHUM, UR
SUBJECT: SLEPAK ARREST

SUMMARY: SLEPAK STILL BEING HELD IN BUTINSKAYA PRISON
AFTER BEING ARRESTED JUNE 2 FOR PARTICIPATING
IN ONE OF A SERIES OF REFUSENIK DEMONSTRATIONS IN WHICH
BANNERS WERE HUNG OUT APARTMENT WINDOWS APPEALING FOR
EXIT PERMISSION. BOTH SLEPAKS SUFFERED BURNS WHEN
INHABITANTS OF APARTMENTS ABOVE POURED BOILING WATER
DOWN ON THEM. MRS. SLEPAK FEARS HUSBAND WILL GET
MAXIMUM FIVE YEAR SENTENCE UNDER MALICIOUS HOOLIGANISM
CHARGES AND HAS SPOKEN OF HANGING HERSELF. END SUMMARY.
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1. SLEPAK ARREST. DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE SEEN WIRE
SERVICE REPORTS ON ARREST OF VLADIMIR SLEPAK FOR
"MALICIOUS HOOLIGANISM." MRS. SLEPAK TELEPHONED
CONSOFF JUNE 4 AND CONFIRMED BASIC DETAILS OF PRESS
REPORTS. SHE SAID THAT FOLLOWING DEMONSTRATION IN
WHICH THEY HUNG BANNER FROM BALCONY, SHE AND HER

HUSBAND WERE TAKEN OUT OF APARTMENT BUILDING THROUGH LARGE CROWD WHICH WAS IN AN EXTREMELY UGLY MOOD AND MIGHT HAVE BECOME VIOLENT IF POLICE HAD NOT BEEN PRESENT. BOTH WERE TAKEN TO BUTINSKAYA PRISON, WHERE VLADIMIR IS STILL BEING HELD. MRS. SLEPAK TOLD CONSOFF SHE FEARS THAT HER HUSBAND WILL BE SENTENCED TO MAXIMUM FIVE YEAR TERM FOR MALICIOUS HOOLIGANISM (PRESUMABLY ARTICLE 206 OF THE RSFSR CRIMINAL CODE). SHE ALSO IS CONCERNED THAT CHARGES MAY BE BROUGHT AGAINST HIM FOR HELPING THEIR SON EVADE DRAFT.

2. MRS. SLEPAK, WHO WAS KEEPING HERSELF UNDER CONTROL WITH DIFFICULTY, SAID THAT "NEIGHBORS" FROM APARTMENT ABOVE POURED BOILING WATER DOWN ON SLEPAKS AS THEY WERE HOLDING BANNER. REFUSENIK SOURCES WHO HAVE SEEN MRS. SLEPAK SINCE INCIDENT SAY THAT SHE HAS BURNS ON ARMS AND THAT VLADIMIR SUFFERED FACIAL BURNS. THIS INCIDENT APPEARS TO BE SOURCE OF TASS REPORT ASSERTING THAT SLEPAKS THEMSELVES POURED BOILING WATER ON CROWD IN STREET BELOW THEIR APARTMENT.

3. MRS. SLEPAK ASKED CONSOFF WHAT EMBASSY WOULD DO FOR HER. SHE SAID THAT SHE SAW NOTHING LEFT TO DO EXCEPT HANG HERSELF. CONSOFF RECEIVED LONG-DISTANCE CALL SAME DAY FROM SON ALEXANDER, NOW IN ISRAEL. HE
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WAS OBVIOUSLY DISTRAUGHT AND GENERAL THRUST OF HIS REMARKS WAS THAT USG SHOULD DO SOMETHING TO GET HIS MOTHER OUT OF SOVIET UNION AND HELP HIS FATHER.

4. ACCORDING TO REFUSENIK SOURCES, SLEPAK DEMONSTRATION WAS ONE OF SEVERAL HELD SAME DAY. ALL OTHERS INVOLVED ONLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN. AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, HANGING BANNERS FROM APARTMENT WINDOWS WAS FALL-BACK PLAN IN EVENT KGB LEARNED OF PLANNED DEMONSTRATIONS AND PREVENTED POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS FROM LEAVING THEIR APARTMENTS. KGB DID IN FACT LEARN OF BOTH ORIGINAL AND FALL-BACK PLANS. AS RESULT, MOST BANNERS WERE TORN DOWN WITHIN A FEW MINUTES OF BEING HUNG OUT WINDOWS. ABOUT TWENTY WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE ABLE TO GATHER AT APARTMENT OF REFUSENIK GRIGORY ROZENSHTEIN. THEY HAD NUMEROUS BANNERS AND APPARENTLY KEPT HANGING NEW ONES OUT AS KGB TORE THEM DOWN. THERE WAS SOME SCUFFLING BETWEEN WOMEN AND KGB AFTER LATTER BROKE IN LOOKING UNSUCCESSFULLY FOR MALE DEMONSTRATORS.

5. MOST SUCCESSFUL DEMONSTRATION, HOWEVER, WAS

APPARENTLY SLEPAKS'. MOST REFUSENIKS' APARTMENTS ARE LOCATED FAR FROM CENTER OF TOWN, BUT SLEPAKS' IS ONLY ABOUT FIVE MINUTE WALK FROM RED SQUARE AND OVERLOOKS ONE OF MOSCOW'S BUSIEST STREETS. MOREOVER, SINCE SLEPAKS HAVE A BALCONY, THEY WERE ABLE TO HOLD BANNER AND KEEP IT FROM BEING TORN DOWN BY KGB. THEY HAD BARRICADED FRONT DOOR AND WERE THEREFORE ABLE TO DISPLAY BANNER FOR SOME TIME (ONE SOURCE TELLS US AN HOUR OR MORE) BEFORE KGB BROKE THROUGH.

6. REFUSENIKS HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE ON SLEPAK ARREST AT ROZENSSTEIN APARTMENT. ABOUT TWENTY OF THEM ALSO WENT TO PUSHKIN SQUARE FOR A DEMONSTRATION. ALL WERE ARRESTED, BUT LATER RELEASED. MATLOCK
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